State Level Conference on Rural Education: Perspective & Problems

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Problems and Difficulties in Promoting Higher Education in Rural Areas
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1. *Introduction:*

It was the University Education Commission (1948-49) had proposed the establishment of Rural Universities. The suggestion was taken up for further examination by a committee appointed by Govt. of India headed by Dr. K.L. Srimali. This Committee recommended the establishment of Rural Institutions in place of Rural University with the following objectives:-

i)   to provide facilities of higher education in rural areas

ii)   to develop an integrated programme for research, extension and training.

iii)   to develop the rural area surrounding the institutions.

iv)   to train the resource persons for the institution who in turn could be used to develop the courses and manage teaching learning tasks.

v)   to enrich and reconstruct rural life to adapt with National and International perspectives.

During the first and second five year plan eleven rural institutes were established in different parts of country. In the Third Five Year Plan all the States were provided at least one rural institution. In this way rural institutions have started admitting the students who had completed the higher secondary education. They were provided 3 year course for diploma in Rural Services and Rural Engineering and 2 year course for Sanitary Inspectors. These institutions also developed Integral Program for Community and Conducted extension activities in the neighborhood villages.

2.   *Technology and Life of Rural Masses:*

2.1   *Ancient Science and Technologies to be revisited*

While asserting that technology is the key to development Dr. Abdul Kalam stresses the fact that benefits of higher education (science and technology) should reach to all segments of rural and urban India (poorest of the poor). Stating that the explosive growth of technologies and the resultant environmental problems led many scientist and technologists to question the single track approach to knowledge, Kalam averse that ancient knowledge bases like tribal societies, knowledgeable people like Ghagh and Bhaddari have to be revisited.

The Knowledge base of ancient civilizations need to be extensively utilized. Teaching learning process needs to be based on real learning for developing skills and lifelong learning abilities in a person. Proper arrangements for the re-education of teachers of the tertiary level will be a reality.

2.2 *Use of Information and Communication Technology*

The life style of masses including rural people is influenced by the technology in general and information and commutation (ICT) in particular. ICT is sure to fulfill the dream of Global Village by making individuals act locally and think globally. It is a vital link to end rural isolation/backwardness. Information and Communication technology is a term used for computer, communication, networking, cell phone and multimedia. Through the use of technologies, access to good educational programmes can be greatly extended to large audience in rural and remote areas with flexibility in subject matter content and in location served. Technology enhances in individual's capability and efficiency with the available resources. It helps in distributing education from world's best sources to all, irrespective of age, creed, religion, social economic, people with special needs crossing all geographical and social barriers. It is a good way to reduce the inequalities between the haves and have nots.

3. Higher Education: An Investment for Economic and Social Empowerment:

3.1 Meaning:

Higher Education should not be considered as a static phenomenon; it is an organic entity that recognizes the changes in the environment, responds to new demand and keep develop with the society in professional way of which it is a part. India has one of the largest systems of higher education in the world. It is still in a state of flux, due to shortage of funding, consumer driven market, uninspired academicians, political interferences, and a variety of other concerns demand that the long pending reforms be addressed and meaningful restricting of higher education system be taken immediately.

3.2 Need for a Holistic Approach

For maintaining the quality in higher education, we have to workout and need based Holistic Approach Quality is to be judged by excellence and by relevance. The courses to be offered at first degree level have to be more relevant to the students to prepare themselves in their levels as earners (earn while you learn). The syllabi of various courses have to be more relevant and constantly revised and updated in order to meet the social needs. The students also need to learn the techniques of solving various problems in life in the areas such as environment, cooperative behavior, learning to live together and learning to be.

3.3 Social Relevance:

Following key elements needs to be included in this regard-

- Good governance (structure, management and policy)
- Funding mechanisms (traditional and modern)
- Concept of higher education and research in rural settings.
- Inter and intra –university communication & relations.
- Selection criteria for admission of students
- Planning & quality control (Peer views about assessment of teaching)

4. Privatization of Higher Education:

4.1   "Privatization is the general process of involving the private sector, in the ownership or operation of a state owned enterprise". Since the impact of privatization is penetrating all sectors of the economy, it is bound to affect the education sector as well. The question is: why is privatization being recommended in education?

4.2   The three aspects of privatization in higher education are as follows:

- *Socioeconomic and industrial development has created pressure towards greater specialization.*
- *As societies grew more complex, and more selective, an efficient means of cultural transmissions evolved resulting in formal institutionalized system.*
- *Research has emerged as one of the most significant dimensions of higher education today.*

Till nineties higher education in India was mostly funded and governed by the state and central governments. Since nineties the output from the higher secondary/intermediate courses has significantly increased the growth of private colleges. This growth of private colleges has been mainly in the fields of arts and sciences rather than professional/technological colleges. This has created a big gap in nation's knowledge, which is more important for the all-round development of the nation. In this context it would be worth mentioning about the concept of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG). The LPG has forced India to go for privatization in general or privatization of education in particular.

The wave of privatization is sweeping across the world. It is aimed at breaking the monopoly of the public sector in a number of areas including education. The essence of privatization lies in the induction of private ownership in publicly owned enterprises. This can lead from zero-public ownership to various degrees of private ownership in form of joint ventures. This is the narrow sense in which the concept of privatization is used. In a broader sense, it connotes besides private ownership, introduction of private management and control in public enterprise.

5. *Trends in Higher Education*

- Higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit keeping in mind Article 26.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- Higher Education should uphold education's role of service to society.

- Quality of education is a multi-dimensional concept, which should embrace all functions and activities, that is, teaching, academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, infrastructure, and academic environment.

- Higher education institutions should be committed to transparent internal and external evaluation conducted openly by independent specialists.

- The potential of Information Communication Technology (ICT) should be fully utilized. Equitable access to these should be assured through international cooperation and support to countries that lack capabilities to acquire such tools.

- Higher education should be considered a public service.

- While diverse sources of funding are necessary, public support for higher education and research remains essential to ensure balanced achievement of its educational and social missions.

- Partnership should be forged between higher educational institutions and responsible state authorities.

- The international dimension of higher education is an inherent part of quality.

6. *Assessment for Higher Education Institutions:*

6.1 *Approach of NAAC:*

It is noteworthy that NAAC's pocess of Assessment and Accreditation is neither inspection to ensure minimum standards nor an exercise at fault finding. The extremes of value judgment continuum may be listed as:

Inspection Vs. Assessment

Minimum Standard Vs. Standards of Excellence

Fault Finding Vs. Institutional Improvement

Sitting Above Vs. Sitting Beside Fragmenting Vs. Holistic

Impressionistic Vs. Data Based Subjective Vs. Objective

Informal Vs. Systematic

Looking at the past Vs. Looking into the future

Suspicion Vs. Trust

Incompetence Vs. Competence

Weaknesses Vs. Strengths

6.2 The final decision of awarding accreditation with Grades by NAAC based on the Self-study Report and Analysis submitted by the institution and the recommendations of the team of peers who visited the institution, is the third and final stage of the accreditation process. The colleges/institutions have to prepare the self-study report and analysis highlighting the achievements under the above heads. These criteria are so framed as to cover the entire sphere of the institutional activities.

The NAAC has specified the following as the criteria for assessment:

Curricular Aspects

Teaching-Learning and Evaluation.

Research, Consultancy and Extension.

Infrastructure and Learning Resources.

Student Support and Progression

Organization and Management

Healthy Practices.

7. *Vocational Courses at College Level in Rural Areas Through Community Colleges.*

7.1 Need Based Vocational Courses under Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) programmes :-

i) BA in Fashion Design
ii) BA in Textile Design
iii) BA in Fashion Merchandising & Production
iv) PG Diploma in Security Operations
v) Diploma in Business Process Outsourcing - Finance and Accounting
vi) PG Certificate in Security Operations
vii) Certificate in Pharmaceuticals Sales Management

7.2 *Other Vocational Courses :-*

1. Bachelor in Tourism Studies **(BTS)**

2. Bachelor in Computer Applications **(BCA)**

3. Bachelor of Commerce **(B.Com)**

4. B.A. (General) and with 'Major' in [Hindi, English, Urdu, Political Science, History, Eco, P.A., Sociology, Math., Philosophy] **(BA)**

5. B. Sc. (General) and with 'Major' in Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Botony, Zoology **(B.Sc.)**

6. Bachelor of Social Work **(BSW)**

7. Bachelor In Library and Information Science **(BLIS)**

8. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Post Basic) **B.Sc. N(PB)**

9. B.Sc. (Hons) in Optometry and Ophthalmic Techniques **(BSCHOT)**

10. B.sc. in Medical Laboratory Technology

11. B.sc. in Anaesthesia & Critical Care Management

12. B.sc. in Medical Records & Health Information Technology

13. B.sc. in Radiation Therapy Technology

14. B.sc. in Medical Imaging Technology

15. Bachelor in Technology in Civil (Construction Management) **(BTCM)**

16. Bachelor in Technology in Civil (Water Resource Engineering) **(BTWRE)**

17. B.Tech. Mechnical Engineering (Computer Integrated Manufacturing) **(BTME)**

18. Bachelor's Preparatory Programme Leading to BA, B.com for non 10+2 **(BPP)**

19. Bachelor of Science (Hospitality and hotel Administration) **(BHM)**

20. Bachelor of Commerce (with Major in Accountancy and Finance) **B.Com.**

21. Bachelor of Commerce (with Major in Corporate Affairs and Administration) **B.Com.**

22. Bachelor of Commerce (with Major in Financial and Cost Accounting) **B.Com.**

23. Bachelor in Nautical Science Leading to B.Sc. Nautical Science **B.Sc, (NS)**

24. B.Tech. AeroSpace Engineering **(BTAE)**

25. B.A. International Hospitality Administration **BA (IHA)**

26. B. B. A. in Retailing

27. Bachelor of Architecture **(B.Arch.)**

28. **B.Tech** Airport Infrastructure Engineering (CIVIL)

29. B.Tech. Aircraft Manufacturing & Maintenance Engineering

30. B.A. in 3D Animation & Visual Effects

IGNOU started 100 community colleges to bring a learning revolution among under-privileged students across the country, July 2009. This effort will empower the disadvantaged through appropriate skill development, leading to gainful employment of people in the grassroots. This will bring a learning revolution. This scheme will lead to inclusive education for most marginalized section of the society. A unique initiative, community colleges will impart education through private-public partnership to underprivileged students using the unutilized capacities of educational institutions across the country. The colleges will commence their courses from the coming academic session. These community colleges will impart vocational education to do away with the prevalent mismatch.

The students who attend these colleges shall acquire associate degrees, which will ensure them a lateral entry to the bachelor's programme for a formal graduation degrees. Initially 100 out of 800 applicant colleges have been selected to run the community colleges. Most of them are private institutions. IGNOU's role will be accreditation, quality monitoring and evaluation, certification and course development. Each selected college has an average capital investment of Rs.150 million including land, building, equipment and other facilities.

The institutions have also tied up with local industries, both small and heavy. Ten to 15 teachers will be put on rolls in each college to conduct the classes for the enrolled students. Apart from use of information technology, there will also be personal contact and counselling to develop sound teaching-learning processes. Pointing out that just five percent of labour forces in India have vocational qualification. Community colleges will bring flexibility to learning and promote both generic and location specific aspects of education. He said while focusing on expansion, IGNOU must keep a close eye on quality. There should be learning by doing method.

It is believed that these colleges will work as transformational agent. The effort must be made to bridge the gap between vision and reality, the scientist said, adding these community colleges must give nutritional education to people in rural India.

8.   Rural Institutes Of Higher Education

1.   Gandhigram Rural Institute, P.O. Gandhigram, Madurai district, Madras

2.   Jamia Rural Institute, Jamianagar, New Delhi

3.   Vidya Bhawan Rural Institute, Udaipur, Rajasthan

4.   Rural Institute of Higher Studies, Birouli, P.O. Dighra, Darbhanga district, Bihar

5.   Balwant Vidyapeeth Rural Institute, Bichpuri, Agra

6.   Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya Rural Institute, Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya Post, Coimbatore

7.   Lok Bharati Rural Institute, Sanosara, Bhavnagar district, Gujarat

8 .   Karam Vir Hire Rural Institute, Gargoti, Kolhapur district, Maharashtra

9.   Rural Institute, Amravati, Maharashtra

10.   Kasturba Rural Institute, Rajpura, Punjab

11.   Rural Institute, Wardha, Maharashtra

12.   Rural Institute, P.O. Hanumanamatti, Ranebennur taluka, Dharwar district. Mysore

13. Rural Institute, Thavanoor Post, Via Edapal, Palghat district, Kerala

14. Kasturba Rural Institute, Kasturbagram Post, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

15. Nanaji Deshmukh Gramodaya Vishvidhalaya Chitrakoot